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Chairman: Mr. DEKANY (Hungary)
(Vice-Chairman)

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In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Dekany (Hungary), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF MR. WILLI BRANDT, FORMER CHANCELLOR OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

1. The CHAIRMAN, speaking on behalf of all members of the Committee, paid tribute to the memory of Mr. Willi Brandt.

AGENDA ITEM 91: ELIMINATION OF RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (continued) (A/47/18, 425, 426, 432, 480 and 481)

AGENDA ITEM 92: RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO SELF-DETERMINATION (continued) (A/47/391, 412 and 433)

2. Mr. AREVALO DE LEON (Guatemala) said that the stability of the emerging world order was threatened not by ideological conflicts but by manifestations of racial, religious and cultural intolerence. The United Nations must redoub e its efforts to eliminate racism to put an end to such manifestations. To that end, Guatemala supported the holding of a third decade to combat racism and racial discrimination. The Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities had a leading role to play in meeting the new challenges that had arisen. It must, however, be scrupulously objective: regrettably, selective or politicized criteria had been applied with regard to Guatemala within the Subcommission.

3. Guatemala was a multicultural society with both a mestizo and Indian culture. Both Indians and mestizos shared the problems characterizing Guatemala's economic and social development. Although the indigenous population had benefited only marginally from national development, that situation was rooted not in racial discrimination but rather in Guatemala's social and economic problems. The same situation affected large sectors of the mestizo population, which suffered from the inability of the State to meet basic needs and from the limitations resulting from a weak economy.

4. The Guatemalan Constitution guaranteed the rights of all citizens and established equality before the law without discrimination as to race, sex or creed and ethnic affiliation. Today, the problems affecting the implementation of the economic and social rights of ethnic groups that applied to all Guatemalans were rooted in underdevelopment.

5. The Constitution recognized the pluralistic nature of Guatemalan society and upheld the right of the indigenous groups to maintain their social, cultural and linguistic identity. The barriers that had prevented those groups in the past from expressing their aspirations and concerns had affected Guatemalan society in general and had been rooted in authoritarianism. Within the current framework of democracy in Guatemala, ethnic groups today freely

(Mr. Arevalo de Leon, Guatemala)

expressed their aspirations and directly benefited from the country's economic development. The problems currently facing Guatemala in the field of development, social justice and democratization would be solved within the country's legal framework, which guaranteed the rights of all citizens and also defined their duties.

6. Certain parties sought to distort the situation of the indigenous population in Guatemala, portraying it as one involving racial discrimination in order to discredit the Government during the sensitive negotiations with the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG). He hoped that the Subcommission would analyse that situation carefully and objectively and reject the position of those who sought to politicize its decisions.

7. Guatemala attached great importance to the principle of the self-determination of peoples and supported its universal and peaceful implementation. Within that framework, his country had recognized in 1991 the right of the Belizean people to self-determination and had taken steps to recognize the State of Belize and establish diplomatic relations with it. At the same time, however, Guatemala maintained a territorial claim, which would be resolved peacefully by the two countries.

8. Mr. NEAGU (Romania) said that the elimination of racism and racial discrimination was closely linked to the right of peoples to self-determination, which could not be implemented without full respect for human rights and freedoms. Romania had acceded to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and all other related international legal instruments, and was fully committed to the strict implementation of human rights in accordance with the highest international standards. His country's new constitution was interpreted in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the other international legal instruments to which it was a party.

9. Romania actively participated in the international effort to put an end to racial discrimination and apartheid, and supported the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade.

10. He commended the activities of the Centre for Human Rights, particularly its seminars, training courses and studies. Romania strongly condemned the recent manifestations of xenophobia in many parts of the world and stressed the need for strict respect for human dignity and measures to prevent discrimination. His country supported the Secretary-General's recommendations for a third Decade, and called upon all Member States to make special efforts to improve education on non-discrimination.

11. Turning to item 92, he commended the report on the question of the use of mercenaries (A/47/412) and in view of the great danger posed by mercenary activities, would support a renewed call by the General Assembly for all States to take the necessary steps to ensure that their territories and their

(Mr. Neagu, Romania)

nationals were not used for the recruitment, assembly, financing, training or transit of mercenaries. He urged the immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops still stationed in the territories of the newly independent States without their consent. The United Nations could play an important role in assisting the relevant negotiations and monitoring such withdrawals.

12. Romania had signed the International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries and supported the call to speed up the process of accession so that the Convention could enter into force as soon as possible. There was also a need to ensure full implementation of the Charter and other relevant international instruments in order to promote self-determination. The distortion of the concept of self-determination by applying it to national, religious or cultural minorities was especially troubling. In that respect, his delegation wholeheartedly supported the view that, if every ethnic, religious or linguistic group claimed statehood, there would be no limit to fragmentation, and peace, security and economic well-being for all would become ever more elusive.

13. Mr. OFFOR (Nigeria) said that the United Nations had always been preoccupied with efforts to combat national pride, which had led some nations to dominate others, and ethnic prejudice, which fomented racism and xenophobia. Despite the great strides made in eliminating weapons of mass destruction, notions of ethnic superiority remained and were finding new forms of expression, undermining United Nations efforts to eliminate racism and promote self-determination.

14. As a multi-ethnic nation, Nigeria fully understood the grave consequences of ethnic tensions. It therefore hoped that the ethnic conflicts in Somalia, the Sudan and the former Yugoslavia would be settled quickly. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination played a vital role in that connection and had to be provided with the resources necessary to fulfil its mandate. Reliance on voluntary contributions, some of which were pledged by developing countries with difficult economic situations, had made it difficult for the Committee to meet regularly. His delegation consequently welcomed the recommendation of the States Parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination that the Committee should be funded through the United Nations regular budget.

15. He noted that a large number of programmes for the Second Decade had yet to be implemented. Meanwhile, ethnic tension and apartheid persisted. There was therefore a clear need for a third decade. His delegation was convinced that, in view of the current positive international political climate, the objectives of the third decade could be achieved within the expected time-frame.

16. That climate should also help to end the ongoing violence in black townships in South Africa. He appealed to all the parties involved in the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) to start the negotiations moving again so as to maintain momentum.

(Mr. Offor, Nigeria)

17. Events in the former Soviet Union, the Baltic States and other parts of the world has demonstrated the legitimacy of peoples' striving for self-determination. That principle should be given concrete meaning wherever desirable. It should be taken into consideration in the case of the Saharan people and, in that connection, his country welcomed the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative to the United Nations Mission for the referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) to overcome difficulties and, in particular, to resolve the dispute over criteria for eligibility to vote in the referendum. His delegation renewed its appeal for the dispatch to Western Sahara of a special representative of the Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), with adequate staff. The recognition by OAU of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic was without prejudice to the outcome of the referendum, which would be organized and supervised entirely by the United Nations.

18. His delegation had followed with keen interest the progress of the peace initiative in the Middle East and commended the role of the United States and the Russian Federation. In his country's view, dialogue would make it possible for Palestinians and Israelis to acknowledge one another's right to a homeland.

19. The United Nations must continue its efforts to eliminate racism and to promote the right of peoples to self-determination. Racism should also be combated through national legislation and, to that end, his delegation proposed that regional monitoring bodies should be established.

20. Mr. MARKS (United States of America) said that, after the repeal of General Assembly resolution 3379 (XXX) equating zionism with racism, the United States was prepared to consider participation in the adoption of a resolution on the proposed third decade against racism and racial discrimination. Eliminating racism was an enormous challenge. His country had suffered from its results in the past, and even in the present, the treatment of individuals in American society sometimes gave evidence of racial discrimination. Laws and procedures had been reformed to provide protection against racism and discrimination, but since they were interpreted and carried out by fallible human beings, the constitutional system contained safeguards such as judicial review, civilian control of the police and military, and trial by jury.

21. It was impossible to eliminate racism from the hearts of human beings, but the United Nations could work to enable Governments to devise laws and other safeguards to protect individuals from its effects. Education could play a part by helping future generations to see the effects of racial discrimination and the way to prevent such destructive behaviour through respect for human rights. A programme of action for a third decade should focus on the reform of legal systems and education. Activities contained in the Programme of Action for the Second Decade, such as training in the preparation of national legislation to combat racism and seminars on community

(Mr. Marks, United States)

relations commissions, should be expanded, and the Secretariat should continue to take advantage of the expertise available through the Centre for Human Rights. On the other hand, his Government firmly believed that the elimination of apartheid was imminent; therefore, it did not approve of the continued and disproportionate emphasis on apartheid in the proposed programme of action.

22. The American people were strongly committed to the complete dismantling of apartheid. The United States welcomed the progress made over the past year and urged all parties to resume the negotiations as soon as possible. It called on the Government of South Africa and all other parties to take action to reduce the level of violence, which if unchecked, would destroy the trust necessary for successful negotiations. In view of the progress made, the United States continued to oppose calls for comprehensive mandatory sanctions. His delegation hoped to work with other delegations to produce resolutions reflecting the reality of the situation without inflammatory language.

23. Turning to the right to self-determination, he said that his delegation did not agree with the Committee's emphasis on the question of Israel and the occupied territories. Self-determination was a complex human rights issue that was not illuminated by dwelling on Israel and the Palestinian people. Furthermore, proposed resolutions on that item should reflect the reality of the situation. The parties in the Middle East were engaged in delicate but promising negotiations towards a comprehensive peace settlement based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). Those negotiations had produced fundamental and irrevocable changes in the way the parties addressed their differences. The current Government in Israel had announced its intention to shift priority from settlement in the occupied territories towards the resolution of pressing social and economic problems within Israel. The parties had begun to grapple with the key issues of land, peace and security. While there had been no breakthroughs, they had laid a good foundation for progress. Any resolutions on that situation must therefore employ the most accurate and even-handed language possible.

24. All delegations must work together to find new, valid expression to their justified outrage against racism and suppression of the right to self-determination. He urged the adoption of draft resolutions addressing the very real problems by proposing achievable goals without useless rhetoric.

25. Mr. O'BRIEN (New Zealand) said that the commitment to rid the world of racism had been one of the first challenges facing the United Nations, and it remained a challenge up to the present day. New Zealand was a multiracial society with the goal of achieving harmonious relations among its various groups. Though it could not claim to be free from discrimination, its Government had a strong political will to ensure that equality and non-discrimination would become a reality.

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

26. The 1840 Treaty of Waitangi between the Maori people and the Crown was the country's founding document. Recently, his Government had made continuing efforts to negotiate claims by Maori in respect of that Treaty. It was also working to see that existing programmes reflected the needs of Maori and provided them with better access to health, education, training and economic resource development. The recently established Ministry of Maori Development, Te Puni Kokiri, sought to ensure Maori participation in the public and private sectors in a competitive environment. Such participation was vital for Maori development, but also contributed to the growth of the nation as a whole, and consolidated the sound working partnership between Maori and the Government.

27. His Government had welcomed the progress in dismantling apartheid in South Africa over the past two years. It was unrealistic, however, to suppose that the path towards that goal would be smooth. The breakdown in the negotiations and the escalation of violence had demonstrated that apartheid would not disappear simply because its statutory bases had been removed. Peace and equality for all the people of that country was now possible in law, but it must still be achieved in practice. Abandoning the negotiations would have unthinkable consequences.

28. His Government believed that the will existed in South Africa to achieve a truly non-racial and democratic State and that each step towards that goal should be acknowledged by the international community. New Zealand had also been encouraged by the South African Government's acceptance that the international community had a legitimate interest in the situation. New Zealand had welcomed the South African Government's constructive response to the recent Security Council debate and the observer fact-finding mission subsequently authorized under resolution 772 (1992) to work within the structures set up under the National Peace Accord. New Zealand intended to participate in a Commonwealth observer group.

29. New Zealand joined the international community in expressing its total abhorrence of the practice of "ethnic cleansing". It fully supported United Nations initiatives to help the victims of the conflict in Yugoslavia, and was preparing to receive a group of people affected by the fighting.

30. New Zealand fully supported the central role of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, but it had been disappointed that the Committee's effectiveness had been compromised because of financial difficulties. It supported the proposal to amend the Convention to allow funding of the Committee from the United Nations regular budget. It also urged States parties to make an effort to fulfil their reporting requirements.

31. With regard to self-determination, his Government was gratified that the process leading to self-determination in New Caledonia remained on course, and was encouraged by the constructive approach adopted by the French Government. Concerning Cambodia, his Government was following closely the implementation of the Paris Agreements and the work of the United Nations Transitional

(Mr. O'Brien, New Zealand)

Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC). It had contributed to both the military and the civilian components, because of its commitment to the principle that all the people of Cambodia had the right to shape their country's destiny in conditions of peace and stability. With regard to the Middle East, New Zealand fully supported the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. The current peace talks presented the best opportunity yet for settlement of that issue.

32. Despite the dawning of a new era in international relations, racism and racial discrimination persisted, and self-determination was not yet universal. New Zealand remained committed to its role in responding to those continuing challenges.

33. Ms. MANSARAY (Sierra Leone) said that her delegation welcomed United Nations efforts to promote human rights and fundamental freedoms, although the world was witnessing a resurgence of racial discrimination, and recent events had dimmed hopes for the elimination of that scourge.

34. Recent events in South Africa continued to give cause for concern. Despite abolition of the apartheid laws, more people had been killed than before their repeal. If the South African Government was to continue to receive the cautious approval of the international community for its agenda of political reform, it must demonstrate its good faith by putting a stop to the descent into anarchy and by bringing the perpetrators of the violence to justice.

35. The civil war in Liberia had had castastrophic consequences for Sierra Leone and its people. Her country had received many refugees from Liberia because of the total breakdown of law and order in that country. As mentioned in the report of the Special Rapporteur on the question of mercenaries (A/47/412), the States in the subregion, including Sierra Leone, after careful deliberation and with great reluctance, had decided to send a peace-keeping force known as the Economic Community Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) to Liberia to end the factional fighting. Because Sierra Leone had provided a base for the ECOMOG peace-keeping force, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia forces loyal to Charles Taylor had launched an invasion of the country. Many lives had been lost and the national economy - particularly agriculture and mining - had been severely affected. The army of Sierra Leone had made great efforts to ensure the protection of civilians not engaged in the war and had refused to follow the path of NPFL, which had committed grave violations of human rights.

36. Her delegation supported the observations of the Special Rapporteur that unless the internal conflict in Liberia was brought to a speedy conclusion, it could involve other countries of the subregion.

37. Mr. COLOMA (Chile) said that the political, legal and social measures taken during the Second Decade represented a valiant effort on the part of

(Mr. Coloma, Chile)

Governments, the United Nations and non-governmental organizations. His country fully endorsed the work of the United Nations in that area and acknowledged that social stability and peace could only be preserved through legal guarantees of the enjoyment of human rights for all.

38. While recognizing the advances made in the field of human rights, his delegation was concerned about the persistance of racism and the re-emergence of xenophobia, in particular with respect to immigrants from developing countries. Consequently, it strongly favoured proclaiming a third decade.

39. Action to combat racism involved a number of aspects. First, in a world which increasingly viewed democracy, freedom and development as the fundamental pillars of social stability, it was essential to recognize the universal nature of racism. Secondly, preventive actions should be stressed: the principle of non-discrimination should be part of human rights education. Thirdly, the principle of non-discrimination should be universally recognized as a binding rule of international law. Fourthly, emergency actions should be envisaged, to be used by the United Nations in cases where racial discrimination had caused a breakdown in the domestic order and external relations of a particular society. Lastly, for the purposes of combating racism, allocation of resources from the United Nations budget, voluntary contributions and funding from the private sector should all be encouraged.

40. The moves in South Africa towards dismantling apartheid thus far were encouraging but inadequate. The process was a fragile one: certain groups in power were willing to use violence to stop it. The United Nations had to persist in its efforts to bring about full equality in South Africa.

41. Chile wished to reaffirm its support for the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The Government had been taking new measures to protect and develop the country's indigenous populations, with a view to increasing their participation in national life. It had replaced the traditional policies of cultural assimilation with a policy based on respect for the identities of indigenous peoples, thereby enshrining ethnic diversity as a value, rather than an obstacle to progress. It had begun enacting legislation which conformed with its new policies and with international instruments on indigenous peoples, being one of the first to accede to the International Labour Organisation's convention concerning indigenous peoples. It was drafting a bill relating to the protection and development of indigenous peoples and had initiated legislation to give constitutional recognition to those groups.

42. The grave situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a result of the aggression by Serbia and Montenegro, seriously violated the right of peoples to self-determination. His Government wholeheartedly supported Bosnia and Herzegovina in its struggle to maintain its territorial integrity, sovereignty and national unity. It shared fully the concern of the international community about the daily violations of human rights in that republic and

(Mr. Coloma, Chile)

endorsed General Assembly resolution 46/242 on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

43. His delegation endorsed the United Nations peace plan for Western Sahara and hoped that both parties concerned would find mutually satisfactory solutions to the conflict. With regard to Haiti, the deplorable situation in that country could not be overlooked. The de facto regime that had overthrown the democratically elected President was still in power. His country fully supported the initiatives taken by the Organization of American States to return to the Haitian people their legitimately elected representatives and would continue to provide humanitarian assistance to Haiti.

44. Ms. KRASIKOVA (Ukraine) said that the United Nations must fully support the negotiations under way in South Africa, help prevent new outbreaks of violence and strengthen the local structures set up in that country under the National Peace Accord. The Human Rights Committee, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Special Committee against Apartheid and other United Nations bodies were making a positive contribution to the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Convention on the Supression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid constituted the basis for international cooperation to combat racism.

45. Universal accession to the former of the two would promote the success of the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993. Her country had already made the declaration provided for in article 14 of that Convention. Endorsement by the General Assembly of the decision taken at the meeting of States parties to the Convention would improve the critical financial situation of the Committee. Compliance with international obligations in that field would be improved by setting up a permanent consultation mechanism between the Committee and the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. Such coordination would also promote the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade.

46. Her delegation was alarmed at the cases of discrimination against particularly vulnerable groups such as migrant workers, stateless persons and indigenous peoples. She welcomed the completion of the draft declaration on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, which should be adopted by the General Assembly at the current session.

47. Respect for the right to self-determination was essential in order to ensure international peace and security as well as social progress and development. Ukraine had consistently advocated the speedy and complete affirmation of the right of peoples to determine their own destiny. Strict observance of that principle was of great importance in order to protect human rights.

(Ms. Krasikova, Ukraine)

48. The United Nations must guarantee the independence of newly independent States striving to achieve democracy. Her delegation welcomed the attainment or restoration of national statehood in Central and Eastern Europe and stressed the need to observe the principles of the Helsinki Final Act in order to maintain peace and stability in the region. The conflicts occurring in the former Yugoslavia and a number of republics of the former Soviet Union underscored the need to implement the right to self-determination through peaceful means in strict compliance with international law and respect for human rights. Her country was aware of its responsibility to ensure that the restoration of Ukrainian statehood was carried out in a peaceful and democratic way with full account taken of the interests of all the nationalities residing in its territory.

49. Mr. MARTINO (Observer for the Holy See) said that, despite almost half a century of action to combat racism, spearheaded by the United Nations, racial hatred and violence were still dangerously alive and were assuming new and cruel visages. In 1988, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace had published a text entitled The Church and Racism - Towards a More Fraternal Society, designed to promote mutual respect between ethnic and social groups. A high-level seminar based on that text had been held at the United Nations in September 1989, sponsored by the Mission of the Holy See.

50. In his message presented on the 1989 World Day of Peace, Pope John Paul II had, with great foresight, addressed the issue of respect for minorities. The Pope had said that, in nations made up of various groups, two general principles had to be fully respected. The first was the inalienable dignity of every human person, irrespective of race, culture or religion. Individuals did not exist for themselves alone, but achieved their full identity in relation to others. Groups of people were entitled to their collective identity, which must be safeguarded, in accordance with the dignity of each member. At the same time, members of minority groups had the duty to treat others with respect and a sense of dignity. The second principle was the fundamental unity of the human family. Thus, the whole of humanity must form a community free from discrimination and based on reciprocal solidarity.

51. In his message, the Pope had also emphasized that the primary right of minorities was their right to exist. To safeguard that right, minorities must be able to preserve and develop their own culture, to have contacts with other groups sharing a common heritage, and to enjoy religious freedom. The Pope had further observed that each right carried with it corresponding duties. It was incumbent on members of minority groups to cooperate for the common good and to help build a peaceful world. Delicate problems arose when minority groups put forward claims which had political implications. In such circumstances, dialogue and negotiations were the only path to peace; refusal led only to violence and bloodshed, of which the world currently witnessed many examples.

(Mr. Martino, Observer, Holy See)

52. The Holy See had responded actively to the crisis in the Balkans since its inception. A small volume entitled Crisis in Yugoslavia - Position and Action of the Holy See (1991-1992) had been sent to all United Nations missions. The Pope had spoken frequently on new developments and had taken initiatives aimed at a cessation of hostilities and mobilization of large-scale relief activities. A number of interreligious cooperative activities had also been undertaken. Immediate action to assist the victims of the Balkan conflict was needed at the national and international levels. In addition, Governments needed to enact legislation aimed at protecting all citizens. It would also be appropriate for the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to focus on the ethnic conflict and infamous "ethnic cleansing" taking place in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

53. Echoing the concerns frequently expressed by Pope John Paul II, the Holy See wished to uphold the rights of all victims of racial hatred and to mobilize assistance for them. It urged the international community to protect the fundamental dignity of all peoples. Survival of peoples must take precedence over political interests, and respect for human rights and democracy must be promoted in order to restore peace.

54. Mr. BRITO CRUZ (Brazil) said that, while the setting of international standards for non-discrimination on the basis of race was a notable accomplishment of the United Nations, recent events showed that the task of ensuring respect for those standards was far from being completed.

55. Brazil reiterated its strong condemnation of the human rights violations in the former Yugoslavia, especially the criminal practices associated with the policy so cynically termed "ethnic cleansing". With regard to South Africa, Brazil strongly favoured continued United Nations action in support of efforts to achieve social peace and democracy in a non-racist and united country. It was concerned about the serious violence there and sympathized with the victims, hoping that the current transition would be successfully and promptly concluded, with the total eradication of apartheid.

56. The emergence of new forms of racism and the resurgence of xenophobia and racist movements, especially as evidenced by violence against ethnic minorities, foreigners and refugees, must be dealt with by the United Nations. Brazil welcomed the recommendation by the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities to appoint a special rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism.

57. There was a fundamental conceptual link between questions of racial discrimination and self-determination. Self-determination could be seen as a democratic principle of non-usurpation, by external or domestic actors, of sovereign prerogatives. The relation between self-determination and democracy underscored the links between self-determination and the situation of minorities; complex though the issues were, the democratic principle of

(Mr. Brito Cruz, Brazil)

self-determination must be conceived in a broad framework that included the protection of minorities. Too often, exclusionism and intolerance lurked beneath the respectable disguise of self-determination, and doctrines of racial hatred were expressed by extremist groups in the name of the nation-state, seen as the exclusive property of a particular ethnic group. Brazil supported the draft declaration on the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, now before the General Assembly.

58. The notion of tolerance was an indispensable counterbalance for persistent prejudice and ignorance. The United Nations must include tolerance as an important element in its efforts to eradicate racism and to ensure the protection of minorities. The proposal by the Director-General of UNESCO to observe an international year of tolerance deserved careful consideration. He recalled that self-determination had meant national independence for Brazil, but had also given his country the opportunity to build a nation based on a diversity of cultures, races and ethnic groups.

59. Aware of the great significance of the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in monitoring the implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, Brazil had supported the amendment to the Convention proposed at the meeting of States parties to the Convention to ensure stability in the financing of the Committee, and hoped that prompt and appropriate action would be taken thereon by the General Assembly.

60. Brazil was gratified to note the unanimous support for the launching of a third decade to combat racism and racial discrimination, would participate actively in the preparation and the activities of the decade and considered that the decade, which must address adequately the problem of the contemporary forms of racism and xenophobia, should receive priority attention in the United Nations.

61. Mr. KHOUINI (Tunisia) said that the emergence of new forms of racism, synonymous with intolerance and xenophobia, was a matter of serious concern. Migrant workers were particularly exposed to discrimination. The Tunisian Government urged host countries to control the manifestations of racial tension and eradicate its causes. They should adopt stronger measures to protect migrant workers and promote tolerance. Stemming the flow of migrants to industrialized countries could not be achieved by closing borders or other repressive measures; the only way was to help the developing countries to provide employment opportunities for their citizens. Such opportunities could be worked out in partnership with the Governments concerned and might involve, for example, the establishment of small- and medium-sized enterprises or codevelopment projects. Special attention must also be given to legalizing the situation of immigrants in the host countries, having due regard for their dignity, interests and acquired rights.

(Mr. Khouini, Tunisia)

62. While welcoming positive developments in South Africa, he regretted the renewed violence there and hoped for a resumption of political dialogue and a speeding up of the process leading to the eradication of apartheid and the goal of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa.

63. Despite the commendable activities undertaken as part of the Second Decade, much remained to be done, and he therefore fully supported the launching of a third decade, in which special attention should be given to new forms of racism and new manifestations of intolerance and xenophobia. International action must be accompanied by the will of Governments to eradicate racism. The Tunisian Government attached particular importance to education in that regard.

64. Certain peoples were still denied the right to self-determination, a recent example being that of the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Tunisian Government supported the Security Council resolutions calling for measures to protect human lives and halt the aggression against that country.

65. The oppressed Palestinian people continued to be denied the right to self-determination. His Government supported current efforts to find a negotiated solution. Such a solution was contingent on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and withdrawal by Israel from all the occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.